

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BISSAU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COTONOU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L LOME 2502

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PORG, ECIN, EFIN, DM, GA, GH, GV, IV, LI, ML,

MR, NG, NI, PU, SG, SL, TO, UV

SUBJECT: ECOWAS PROTOCOLS SIGNED IN ATMOSPHERE OF AFRICAN
SOLIDARITY AT LOME SUMMIT, NOVEMBER 3-6, 1976

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REF: LOME 2501,

BEGIN SUMMARY: ECOWAS SUMMIT II CHARACTERIZED BY PRAGMATISM AND DEDICATION TO GOAL OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF WEST AFRICAN REGION. ECOWAS SECRETARIAT HEADQUARTERS TO BE LOCATED IN LAGOS AND FUND IN LOME. IVORY COAST TO PROVIDE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF ORGANIZATION; LIBERIA TO PROVIDE MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FUND. SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS FOCUSED STRONGLY ON REGIONAL CONCERNS AND NEEDS AND AVOIDED EXTRANEIOUS POLITICAL ISSUES. IF ECOWAS TRAIN GENERATES ENOUGH STEAM TO LEAVE STATION, U.S. SHOULD BE ON BOARD. END SUMMARY.

1. A SUMMIT MEETING OF TEN HEADS OF STATE AND HIGH-RANKING REPRESENTATIVES OF FIVE OTHER WEST AFRICAN STATES TOOK PLACE IN LOME FROM NOVEMBER 3-6 TO SIGN FIVE PROTOCOLS IMPLEMENTING THE MAY 28, 1975 TREATY OF LAGOS WHICH BROUGHT THE ECONOMIC COMMUNITY OF WEST AFRICAN STATES (ECOWAS -- CEDEAO IN FRENCH) INTO BEING. THE SUMMIT MEETING FOLLOWED AN OCTOBER 29-31 MINISTERIAL MEETING IN LOME AT WHICH FINAL AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON IMPLEMENTING PROTOCOLS.

2. THE PROTOCOLS RELATE TO: 1) THE ASSESSMENT OF LOSS OF REVENUE DURING THE FIRST YEAR THE TREATY IS TO BE IN FORCE. 2) THE DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF PRODUCTS ORIGINATING IN MEMBER STATES OF THE ECOWAS. 3) THE RE-EXPORTATION WITHIN ECOWAS OF GOODS IMPORTED FROM THIRD COUNTRIES. 4) THE CONTRIBUTION OF MEMBER STATES TO THE BUDGET OF ECOWAS. 5) THE ECOWAS FUND FOR COOPERATION, COMPENSATION AND DEVELOPMENT. QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE LOCATIONS OF THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE ECOWAS SECRETARIAT AND FUND AND THE SELECTION OF MEN TO LEAD THESE FACILITIES WERE NOT RESOLVED AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL.

3. UNTIL THE MINISTERIAL MEETING IT HAD APPEARED THAT THE HEADQUARTERS WOULD COME TO LOME; HOWEVER, IT SEEMS THAT SOME FORM OF DEAL WAS STRUCK BETWEEN TOGO AND NIGERIA AT THE MINISTERIAL MEETING BY WHICH TOGO AGREED TO ACCEDENT THE VERY STRONG DESIRE OF THE

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NIGERIANS TO HAVE ECOWAS HEADQUARTERS LOCATED IN LAGOS

TOGO AND NIGERIA, WHICH INITIATED AND PILOTED ECOWAS INTO BEING, COOPERATED CLOSELY DURING THE SUMMIT MEETING. PRESIDENT EYADEMA OF TOGO AND LT GEN OBANSANJO, HEAD OF THE NIGERIAN FEDERAL MILITARY GOVERNMENT, APPEARED TO GET ALONG WELL AS THE PERSONAL LEVEL AND BOTH REPORTEDLY PLAYED KEY ROLES RESPECTIVELY

WITHIN THE ANGLOPHONE AND FRANCOPHONE GROUPS IN MARSHALLING SUPPORT FOR WHAT PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY OF IVORY COAST CALLED "DYNAMIC COMPROMISES."

4. HOUPHOUET APPARENTLY WAS INSTRUMENTAL, HOWEVER, IN BRINGING GENERATIONAL GAPS (A NIGERIAN SOURCE SNARLED THAT SENEGALESE PRESIDENT SENGHOR HAD SOUGHT TO IMPEDE PROGRESS THROUGHOUT THE MEETING); IN SMOOTHING OVER LATENT ANGLOPHONE-FRANCOPHONE DISTRUST; AND DOWN-PLAYING DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES (PRESIDENT KEREKOU OF BENIN REPORTEDLY INSISTED ON THE NEED TO GIVE THE NEW ORGANIZATION A MARXIST/LENINIST CHARACTER). PRESIDENTS TOLBERT OF LIBERIA AND STEPHENS OF SIERRA LEONE REPORTEDLY ALSO PLAYED QUIETLY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE.

5. HOWEVER, THE MAJESTERIAL HOUPHOUET, WITH HIS CHARACTERISTIC CHESHIRE CAT SMILE, DEFTLY MADE CERTAIN HE DID NOT UPSTAGE PRESIDENT EYADEMA. THE TOGOLESE PRESIDENT WORE HIS STATESMAN'S MANTLE COMFORTABLY AND USED THE ECOWAS MEETING TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM DOMESTIC POLITICAL BENEFIT. EYADEMA ORGANIZED HIS RALLY OF THE TOGOLESE PEOPLE TO PROVIDE DEAFENING ENTHUSIASM AT ALL STAGES OF THE SUMMIT, BUT A GOOD DEAL OF THIS ENTHUSIASM APPEARED RELATIVELY GENUINE AND THE SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS CLEARLY ENJOYED THE LUSTY POLITICALLY-ORIENTED SINGING AND DANCING PROVIDED FOR THEM BY PARTY "ANIMATORS." OVER-ALL, THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SUMMIT WAS WELL CONCEIVED AND WELL EXECUTED.

6. THE SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS DECIDED TO BASE THE ECOWAS HEADQUARTERS IN LAGOS AND THE FUND IN LOME. THIS WAS SATISFACTORY FROM THE TOGOLESE POINT OF CONFIDENTIAL

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VIEW; A SOURCE CLOSE TO PRESIDENT EYADEMA SAID "WE ARE CONTENT TO BE LUXEMBOURG NOT BRUSSELS." THE NIGERIANS WERE ALSO PLEASED. WHEN ASKED HIS OPINION OF THE RESULTS OF THE SUMMIT, THE NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO TOGO SAID "WE HAVE NO COMPLAINTS." IVORY COAST IS TO PROPOSE A CANDIDATE FOR THE POST OF ECOWAS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND LIBERIA IS TO PROPOSE A CANDIDATE FOR THE POST OF MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE FUND.

7. THE CONFERENCE TOOK NOTE "WITH INTEREST" OF A TOGOLESE-NIGERIAN PROPOSAL FOR INSTITUTING WITHIN ECOWAS A COLLECTIVE PACT OF NON-RECOURSE TO FORCE

SETTLING DISPUTES. THIS PROPOSAL WAS MADE AT

THE OPENING SESSION ON NOVEMBER 4 BY EYADEMA, BUT
THERE WAS NOT ADEQUATE TIME TO STUDY IT IN DEPTH.

8. COMMENT: ECOWAS SUMMIT II TOOK PLACE AFTER 18
MONTHS OF CAREFUL PREPARATION AND THERE WAS AN
EVIDENT DESIRE ON THE PART OF ALL PARTICIPANTS TO
PROCEED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF A REGIONAL STRUCTURE
WHICH HAS THE POSSIBILITY OF TRANSCENDING NATIONAL
DIFFERENCES AND ENCOURAGING REGIONAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION
AND STRENGTH. ALL THE SPEECHES SET FORTH
THESE THEMES. THE LEIT-MOTIF WHICH RAN THROUGH SPEECHES
AS DIVERSE AS THOSE OF HOUPHOUET, OBASANJO AND SENGHOR
WAS THE NEED FOR THE POLITICAL WILL TO MAKE THE
ORGANIZATION SUCCEED. HOUPHOUET SAID THAT "THE FAITH,
THE PERSEVERANCE AND THE WILL WHICH WE HAVE UP TILL
NOW FORTUNATELY DEMONSTRATED, WILL BE EVEN MORE NECESSARY
FOR US IN ORDER TO GIVE TO THIS GREAT BODY WHICH WE
ARE CONSTITUTING ITS SKIN AND ITS BLOOD." THIS TENTA-
TIVELY HOPEFUL ATTITUDE APPEARED TO CHARACTERIZE THE
SUMMIT. ON THE WHOLE, THERE WERE ONLY BRIEF AND
PRO FORMA REFERENCES TO IMPERIALISM, THE SOUTHERN AFRICA
QUESTION, AND THE LIKE. THE SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS CAME
TO LOME IN A BUSINESSLIKE WAY AND REMAINED CONCENTRATED
ON THE BUSINESS AT HAND. THE WAY IS NOW CLEAR FOR
ORGANIZING A SECRETARIAT AND PROCEEDING WITH
THE NEXT STEPS IN BUILDING THIS ORGANIZATION. THERE
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APPEARS TO BE A STRONG COMMITMENT, AT LEAST AT THE SUMMIT,
TO DO SO. U.S. POLICY TOWARD ECOWAS SHOULD CONTINUE TO
BE ONE OF "WAIT-AND-SEE" BENIGNITY. HOWEVER, IF THE
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TAKES ON REAL SUBSTANCE, WE
MIGHT SEEK WAYS TO ENCOURAGE WHAT COULD BE A SIGNIFICANT
FORCE FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE REGION. IN BRIEF, IF THE
ECOWAS TRAIN GETS UP ENOUGH STEAM TO LEAVE THE
STATION, THE U.S. SHOULD BE ON BOARD.
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